

(d) *Time period for determination.* SBA will determine the EDWOSB or WOSB status of the protested concern within 15 business days after receipt of the protest, or within any extension of that time that the contracting officer may grant SBA. If SBA does not issue its determination within the 15-day period, the contracting officer may award the contract, unless the contracting officer has granted SBA an extension. The contracting officer may award the contract or begin performance after receipt of a protest if the contracting officer determines in writing that an award must be made to protect the public interest.

(e) *Notification of determination.* SBA will notify the contracting officer, the protestor, and the protested concern in writing of its determination. If SBA sustains the protest, SBA will issue a decision explaining the basis of its determination and requiring that the concern remove its designation on the CCR and ORCA as an EDWOSB or WOSB, as appropriate.

(f) *Effect of determination.* SBA's determination is effective immediately and is final unless overturned by OHA on appeal pursuant to §127.605 of this part.

(1) The purpose of the protest process is to ensure that contracts are awarded to, and performed by, eligible WOSB and EDWOSB concerns. A contracting officer shall not award a contract to an ineligible concern, and shall not authorize an ineligible concern to begin performance.

(2) Where award was made and performance commenced before receipt of a negative final agency decision, the contracting officer may terminate the contract, not exercise any option, or not award further task or delivery orders.

(3) Whether or not a contracting officer decides to not allow an ineligible concern to fully perform a contract under paragraph (f)(2) of this section or under §134.704 of this title, the contracting officer cannot count the award as one to an EDWOSB or WOSB and must update the Federal Procurement Data System—Next Generation (FPDS—NG) and other databases from the date of award accordingly.

(4) A concern that has been found to be ineligible may not represent itself as a WOSB or EDWOSB on another procurement until it cures the reason for its ineligibility. A concern that believes in good faith that it has cured the reason(s) for its ineligibility may request an examination under the procedures set forth in §127.405.

§ 127.605 What are the procedures for appealing an EDWOSB or WOSB status protest decision?

The protested concern, the protestor, or the contracting officer may file an appeal of a WOSB or EDWOSB status protest determination with the SBA's Office of Hearings and Appeals (OHA) in accordance with part 134 of this chapter.

Subpart G—Penalties

§ 127.700 What penalties may be imposed under this part?

Persons or concerns that falsely self-certify or otherwise misrepresent a concern's status as an EDWOSB or WOSB for purposes of receiving Federal contract assistance under this part are subject to:

(a) Suspension and Debarment pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Federal Acquisition Regulations, subpart 9.4 of title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations;

(b) Administrative and civil remedies prescribed by the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. 3729–3733 and under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act, 31 U.S.C. 3801–3812;

(c) Administrative and criminal remedies as described at Sections 16(a) and (d) of the Small Business Act, 15 U.S.C. 645(a) and (d), as amended;

(d) Criminal penalties under 18 U.S.C. 1001; and

(e) Any other penalties as may be available under law.

PART 130—SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

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